

What's Happening?

A NEWSLETTER

FOR THE MAINE MEDICAL CENTER FAMILY

New sign will herald change at the "front door"

Do you remember the ratty gray "Maine Medical Center" sign on the corner of Bramhall and Charles Streets? The one that was faded and beginning to come apart? The one that didn't really convey the image of a top-flight, proud institution? The sign came down as part of the Bramhall Lobby renovation, and it won't be coming back.

As part of a larger effort to increase MMC's attractiveness to our community and our customers, a new "Maine Medical Center" sign will go up in the old one's place. It will be in roughly the same spot, but will be set back from the sidewalk and surrounded by landscaping. The granite and metal sign will feature the MMC logo and name.

The sign will serve the very practical purpose of letting people know they have found Maine Medical Center, but the existing sign did that. There are two other important reasons for putting up a new one, and you may recognize that they are the same two reasons for the Bramhall Lobby renovation and for the creation of the Customer Service Representative positions in the Bramhall Lobby: customer comfort and competitiveness.

SIGN, SEE P.2

The new realities of healthcare: A Special Report

Part 2: Spending wisely and where it counts

As we noted in the last installment of this series, MMC like most hospitals is earning less for its services each year. In fact, right now MMC is nearly spending more to care for our patients than we are receiving from payers. We could be operating at a loss within a year unless we act now.

What's at stake? In the worst case, our programs and services, since no organization can afford to operate at a loss indefinitely. Just like we as individuals can't spend more than we make for very long, neither can MMC. Just like each of us, the hospital has to reduce expenses even if it means not doing some things we would like to do.

Our mission is at risk if our financial picture worsens. MMC provides nearly 23% of all the free care delivered in Maine, and provides many services that could never be justified on a

strictly cost basis. These things are essential to our mission, and they require that we take in more than we spend. As the old saying goes, "no margin, no mission".

MMC is the region's largest and most stable employer, another reason we think it is important to remain financially strong so we can continue that long tradition. The hospital is a significant economic force in southern, central, and western Maine, and the Maine Hospital Association estimates that every hospital job creates .45 other jobs. Our region depends on us not only for care, but for much more.

Like individuals, organizations also have credit ratings. As the hospital's financial performance diminishes, so does its credit rating, as many hospitals across the country have found out. The credit rating affects the

SPECIAL REPORT, SEE P.5

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Friday, December 1, 1000 -- 1700 hours, Dana #7 & Dana #9

Present yourself at the blood drive and have your name entered in a drawing for a TV/VCR!

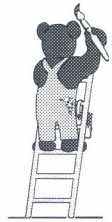
Name to be drawn after the completion of the blood drive.

Please give blood.

Come join the fun!

Holiday window decorating party

Maine Medical Center's annual holiday festivities will kick off with our Holiday Window Decorating Contest, to be held *Wednesday, December 6, from 1600 to 1900 hours* at both the MMC and Brighton campuses. Plans are also underway for the Holiday Reception, which will be held Wednesday, December 13.



Gather your friends and co-workers together and sign up for your window! Paints and brushes will be provided, along with snacks, door prizes, and holiday music. You're welcome to bring your children; remember, you will be responsible for their care.

To reserve your window at the Bramhall campus, contact Angie Adams in Human Resources Recruitment via email (adama) or at 871-6169. To reserve your window at the Brighton campus, contact Roland Gosselin, Manager of BMC Nutrition Services, at 879-8331. Windows are limited, reserve yours soon!



MMC and Portland Adult Education are pleased to offer a CNA course beginning **January 8, 2001.**

Please attend an **Information Session on Monday, November 27, 1830-2000 hours, or Wednesday, November 29, 1030-1200 hours, in the Dana Center Auditorium.**

Cost of the course will be paid by MMC. FMI please call 871-2397.

Book Fairs to benefit children's services

November 27 & 28, Brighton Campus

December 20, 21, 22, Bramhall Campus

The Book Fairs raise about \$10,000 each year for The Barbara Bush Children's Hospital. Call 871-2101 for more information.

Verizon Wireless Info Tables

**Bramhall: December 7 & 14,
1100-1500 hours**

**Brighton: December 13,
1100-1400 hours**

**Scarborough: December 7,
1200-1400 hours**

SIGN, FROM P. 1

The "front door" at MMC has long been the subject of complaints. Many have felt that it doesn't convey a sense of comfort and friendliness, that it doesn't reassure patients and visitors that they are in secure hands. In fact, an employee team made a formal report to the hospital several years ago that took administrators on a visual tour of the hospital through the lens of a video camera. That was the beginning of the planning for a new, more inviting look.

People coming into a hospital, especially a large hospital like Maine Medical Center, are often under stress. Greeting them with a welcoming, warm environment can put them at

ease and make the entire experience easier for everyone.

Likewise, MMC needs to be a welcoming, warm, and attractive place if it is to succeed in the increasingly competitive healthcare world. As with any other business, and even more so because of the kind of business we're in, the physical environment plays an important role in how people feel about their experience.

In fact, market research in service businesses shows that the "intangibles" often have a greater impact on a customer's overall perception of a service than the actual service itself. Often they will simply *expect* quality service and base their

purchase decision on factors such as physical environment, how pleasant the staff was, how much information they received, and so on.

For all these reasons, MMC has made an investment in its "front door". The new sign will be outside a newly-renovated Bramhall Lobby, and inside the lobby will be Customer Service Representatives and front desk volunteers. This combination should help those who arrive here, often unexpectedly and under stress, find their way and feel better about entering the hospital. And it will be nicer for our neighbors, and for those of us who come through the door every day, as well.

Caring

TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

What's Caring To Make A Difference all about? It's about people who make MMC special. It's about the folks who are quietly working hard each day to improve themselves, improve their departments, and improve the quality of life at MMC for everyone who enters our doors.

Walk a Mile -- or Two -- in Their Shoes!

If you were to measure the average number of miles that our CSD Transport Aides travel around the hallways and stairwells of MMC, it would measure closer to 9 miles on a typical day and as high as 12 on a really busy one. Wow! Now that's impressive! It is easy to understand where all these miles take them when you consider some more statistics.

During one recent day in November, Linda Lovett, the CSD dispatcher, had logged the following activity into her computer terminal in a 7-hour period: 235 errands, 34 patient transports, and 11 discharges. Linda's voice is the one you hear on the day shift when you make a call to CSD requesting service or supplies. If the customer is unsure what an item may be called it becomes Linda's job to assist them as quickly and accurately as possible. Linda understands how busy staff are on the floors these days and she tries hard to get them the help they need in order to deliver good patient care.

One area Linda and others

in CSD and the Storeroom (located just across the hall) have worked on recently is the awareness campaign "*Help Us, Help You*" which emphasizes the differences in services the departments provide. With a better understanding on the part of clinical staff comes less delay in ordering and delivering supplies to the units. "People still call us for storeroom supplies rather than calling the storeroom directly," says Linda. Because the CSD Transport Aides deliver

supplies to the units, staff get confused and end up calling CSD for almost everything. "It's getting better slowly," says Linda. "I just want our people at the bedside to get what they need as soon as possible."

Delivering equipment to the nursing units and transporting patients is not all these 18 Transport Aides do 24x7x365! David Pelletier, who supervises this great group of staff, proudly boasts about the responsibilities these folks have for some of our most critical patient care equipment. For example, they maintain a total of 73 emergency code carts throughout the hospital by checking for outdated supplies and refilling carts as they are used. Every time there is a code called, they rush to the scene with a defibrillator and airway access equipment. It will not



matter if the code is called in the Radiology Department, on the 9th floor, or in the Coffee Shop, they will respond within minutes!

Another category of patient care equipment we depend on in a hurry is IV pumps. More than 700 pumps are cleaned and delivered to patient care areas on a daily basis. The day I was there was extremely busy and because there were only three pumps left in the department, staff were out on the units looking in all corners for pumps that could be returned, cleaned, and dispatched once again. One frustration they have is waiting for elevators. "You can tell when the afternoon change of shift is coming. Our people can wait up to 15 minutes for an elevator if employees are using them to get to and from work," says David. As we know, the Bean wing elevators are primarily for patient and equipment transport, and for people traveling to the Gibson Pavilion and Barbara Bush Children's Hospital Inpatient Unit.

At times, the Transport Aides serve as a back up to the Emergency Department when the activity level there is critical and they often transport patients to Radiology after 8 PM. Their friendly smiles and confident manner help to decrease the anxiety for many patients.

With the installation of the translogic tube system at MMC several years ago, some smaller items can now be transported with the push of the button. But what happens when the system is not working? You guessed it! CSD is there delivering supplies

and even blood products!

The CSD transport team enjoys making an important contribution to patient care and MMC. It is evident in the longevity of their staff. The 18 people there have a combined tenure of 194 years! That averages

out to nearly 11 years each! After learning all this, it is not hard to understand how the miles add up. It gives new meaning to the old adage...you have to walk a mile in their shoes to know what it means to be a CSD Transportation Aide.

It's Not too Early to Think About Quality

The staffs of CPQI, Journey to Excellence, and Medical Quality invite you to think about presenting your quality improvement success stories on **April 5 and 6, 2001**, at the Maine Medical Center Quality Fair. You may remember that our last fair was held in March 1999 in preparation for the May JCAHO visit. Though JCAHO will not visit MMC in 2001, the fair still provides a wonderful opportunity to showcase the many quality initiatives taking place here. When presenting your PI projects, please remember to show interdisciplinary team initiatives, measurable results, ongoing monitoring, and use of the Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle (PDCA).

In addition, we would like to hear from anyone who has focused on patient safety or customer service improvement projects. Finally, the fair will be held in the back section of *Impressions Café* (near the windows that overlook the mountains) on April 5 starting at 9 AM and running continuously until 9 AM on Friday April 6.

Although winter has not yet arrived, spring will be here before you know it. So start planning your "storyboard" now! If you have any questions or need assistance, please call CPQI at 871-2009 or email gregoj@mail.mmc.org or bridgc@mail.mmc.org.

Patient Satisfaction Survey Update

Those of you who are used to receiving quarterly patient satisfaction scores, know that we have experienced some significant delays in data reporting. In the next few weeks, the CPQI Department will receive a data disk which will include survey results from March 2000 forward. We will then create reports and distribute them to departments that have been receiving data.

When our current contract expires on December 31, we will transition to a different survey tool. We are in the process now of evaluating proposals. Once a company has been selected, the CPQI Department will coordinate implementation with individual department heads and administrators.

We will be happy to share more information with you as it develops. For any questions about patient surveys, feel free to call the CPQI staff at 871-2009.

Caring To Make A Difference is a monthly publication of the Continuous Productivity and Quality Improvement Office. Ideas, questions, and comments may be directed to Cindy Bridgham, CPQI Office, at 871-2009, Fax 871-6286.

cost of borrowing money, which is essential for capital expenses like equipment and new or renovated facilities.

Fortunately, we've already begun one of the most important and most difficult responses to this situation. The *Journey to Excellence* initiative that we started in January 1999 has made it easier to be not only a better hospital but a more efficient hospital. It has "softened the blow" of the negative financial pressures we are feeling.

Journey to Excellence has already reduced the amount of additional savings we have to find in order to maintain our financial health. So far, hardworking project teams have identified **\$8.3 million in budget reductions** and **\$8.3 million in additional revenues** for Fiscal Years 2000 and 2001. That will go a long ways toward keeping us healthy, and the projects have improved operations and freed up funds to continue with our other important work.

So the first order of business for finishing Fiscal Year 2000 and developing the budget for Fiscal Year 2001 was to make certain that we achieved those *Journey to Excellence* savings and realize the service improvements that go along with them. JTE project teams will also continue to look for more opportunities to improve our services and our financial picture.

Meanwhile, our financial teams will be taking a tougher stand in managed care negotiations. The pendulum has swung too far to the insurer's side, and it is time for providers to fight hard for the reasonable resources they need to take care of the insurance company's policyholders. MMC will be increasing

some charges accordingly.

There also will be some capital projects and new programs that we will have to defer for this year and next. Again, if your family budget can't support the new deck, for instance, you have to wait until next season. The new furnace, on the other hand, can't wait! That's the kind of priority-setting MMC's managers and administrators had to do as the FY 2001 budget was developed.

All this will help tremendously, and the result is that the projected shortfall – above and beyond all these actions – is much lower than it would have been otherwise. We still had to reduce the FY 2001 budget by another \$4.5 million in order to stay financially healthy. That's a big number, but imagine how big it would be if not for the *Journey to Excellence* savings and revenue enhancements.

There is no way to achieve these kind of savings without reducing the number of employees, right? Not necessarily. We have already found that by adding positions in some areas we can pay for the positions and then some. A project in Patient Accounts, for example, found that by adding staff we could increase revenue by much more than the cost of the additional staff.

Reductions in staff may be necessary in some areas, but because we're looking at the issues *before* they become a crisis, we can manage most reductions through attrition or by moving people into new positions. Many hospitals have had to face massive revenue reductions in very short periods of time, with the result that they had to have massive layoffs. There will be no

"layoffs" at MMC as long as we can find another way, and we firmly believe we can.

There was good news about wages for FY 2001, as well, despite rumors that there would be a wage freeze at Maine Medical Center this year. In fact, we committed to a competitive wage package so that we can attract quality people and fill vacant positions, and retain the good people we have here already. We have no intention of compromising our competitive wage structure or diminishing the compensation of hard-working people in order to address our financial concerns.

The next few years will be tough, there's no doubt about it. As we said last time, MMC and its caregivers did not create the pressures we all face. But we do have the responsibility to confront them and find ways to continue serving our community. We are in a good position right now, and by acting now we can stay that way. We can do it.

Next time: Building our future – new places for what we do.

Getting through the holidays when you've lost a loved one

When you've lost a loved one, the holiday season can be a painful reminder of your loss. MMC has a free program to help people learn to live with the pain instead of being consumed by it.

Peggy Quinlan, LCSW
Wednesday, December 6,
1630--1800 hours

Thursday, December 7,
1130-1300 hours

MMC Family Practice Center
Corner of Congress and
India Streets, Portland
FMI: call 842-7345

Win a Corvette!

Win a classic '63 Split Window Corvette with only 300 miles on it! For \$100, purchase a ticket to win this classic car and help children and their families at the Maine Children's Cancer Program. First prize will be the Corvette. Second, third, and fourth prizes will be \$1,000. The drawing will be held on December 22 at the Maine Children's Cancer Program in Scarborough at 1800 hours. Winners not present will be notified by phone. Only 600 tickets will be sold!

For more information or to purchase a ticket, contact Christi in the Development Department at 871-6274.

Holiday music to benefit MCCC

The Maine Children's Cancer Program is proud to announce that Maine Radio and Television and the Maine Children's Cancer Program have teamed up this holiday season on the release of a Christmas music CD. The very talented Laura Darrell, a thirteen-year-old sensation from North Yarmouth, has lent her voice to this project and the final product is incredible. Even more incredible is the fact that \$3.00 of every CD and cassette sold will be donated to the Maine Children's Cancer Program. This could amount to a donation of \$120,000 to \$150,000 to the program.

The CD and cassette are available at Shaw's Supermarkets, Reny's Department Stores, Mr. Paperbacks, Elks Lodges, and at a table in the Maine Mall: \$14.99 for the CD, \$9.99 for cassette.

Volunteers needed

Laura Darrell will be singing in this year's "Magic of Christmas" with the Portland Symphony Orchestra, and the Maine Children's Cancer Program is looking for volunteers to help sell the benefit CDs and tapes at a booth at the concert. Volunteers are also needed to help at a table at the Maine Mall. Both of these opportunities need people for Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. If you would like to be involved with either of these MCCC volunteer opportunities, please contact Christi in the Development Department at 871-6274.

"Strike Out Cancer in Kids" raises over \$240,000 to support MCCC

The "Strike Out Cancer in Kids" program raised more than \$240,000 during the 2000 Sea Dogs season; the program has raised over \$680,000 during in six years. Thanks to the efforts of Peoples Heritage Bank, The Portland Sea Dogs, ABC 8 WMTW, and the community, the lives of hundreds of children and their families fighting their battle with childhood cancer are being helped.

At the Italian Heritage Club on October 31, more than 150 friends of MCCC gathered to celebrate as John Menino and Ted Scontras of Banknorth Group, Inc. recognized community leaders who helped raise the \$240,000 to support MCCC. Vince Conti, MMC President and CEO, and Susan Whitehouse, MCCC Board President, extended a very special thank you from the children cared for at MCCC, and shared why MCCC is honored to be part this great community effort.

Research study for the prevention of osteoporosis

Maine Medical Center's OB/GYN Department is recruiting women between the ages of 40-75 for participation in a research study testing the safety and effectiveness of an investigational medication that **may prevent osteoporosis**. This investigational medication may lower cholesterol.

Participants must be three years past menopause and must not have used hormone replacement therapy in the past six months. Participation involves at least 12 visits over a period of 26 months.

Qualified participants will receive study medication and study-related health assessments, including bone density testing, gynecological exam, mammogram, and compensation for travel.

For more information and initial phone screening, call:

Helen Alves, RN
Maine Medical Center
Research Institute
207-842-7911 or 207 842-7910

King Middle School is looking for tutors to assist students with basic math, English, and social studies work. Tutors are need from 1430 - 1535 hours, Monday through Thursday. If you are interested, please call Sheila Murray at 874-8140.

Marketplace

In order to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to use the Marketplace, ads may be placed *once only*. Repeats will be permitted only on a space-available basis.

FOR SALE

8' x 10' aluminum shed for sale. Never built. New this spring. Gambrel shape. Bought at Home Depot. Paid \$450, will sell for \$300. Call 583-6410.

Packard Bell computer. 1997 Pentium I/166MZ/16mb hard drive. 15' monitor, printer. Great for student. \$200 or BO. Call 781-1505 days.

Golf clubs. Set of Orbiter irons 3 thru wedge (graphite shaft). \$150. Call 854-5351.

Electric wheelchair, "Jazzy" model 1105. New; only used 3 hours. \$1,000 or BO. Call 775-5091.

Cello, 1930s, good condition. 2 bows & hardshell case included. Asking \$2,800. Call 882-8370.

Two 1996 Polaris ultra 680cc, his/her sleds. Many features, \$2,950 each; 2000 aluminum trailer w/snow shield & spare tire, \$1,000. Call 688-2291.

Brand new Philips Magnovox 32" color TV w/new black TV stand. Remote control & cable ready. \$600 or BO. Call 783-1018

Jr. golf set. Includes golf bag & 8 clubs. Used one short season. Great Christmas gift idea. \$75 or BO. Call 741-2150 evenings.

Black Triumph woodstove 23Dx28Wx30H w/fireview front & accessories. \$200 firm. 1 cord of wood free w/woodstove only. Call 865-4078.

1996 Toyota Tercel, 2 dr, w/ski rack & snow tires. Very good condition. \$5,500. Call 799-5071 evenings/weekends.

FOR RENT

One of 3 unfurnished rooms in large furnished house, quiet neighbor-

hood, Rosemont area. On two bus-lines, & within easy reach of downtown Portland, MMC & airport. Unrestricted on-street parking. \$250 - \$350/mo., depending on room chosen, plus 1/3 utilities. Call 842-5901.

Portland: Room, 1½ miles from MMC. Looking for professional non-smoker, neat, clean. Comfortable in gay household. Must enjoy animals. \$535/mo. Available 12/1. Call 828-8797 ext 2.

Beautiful 2 BR avail. now. Must see to appreciate. Many extras including DW, W/D hookup, close to I-95, and discounted rent when paid early. \$725/mo., h/hw incl. Call 926-5091.

West End brick. 3 flr. fully furnished. Quiet, clean, all utilities. Park 1 vehicle. \$1,200/mo. N/S, no pets. Call 998-2373.

West End room. Quiet in Victorian building w/K privileges for N/S female professional or mature student. W/D, hardwood floors. All utilities included. \$98/wk, \$380 security deposit. Avail. Jan. 1. Call 879-1409.

Park St. Row: A short walk to MMC. Lg. 1 BR w/den in lovely historic townhouse. Wood floors, large windows, high ceilings, view, laundry. Quiet prof. bldg. No pets or smoking. Refs. req. \$950/mo. w/all utilities. Call 772-5156.

Condo. 20 West St, near MMC. 2 BR, 1 BA, off street parking, high ceilings, hardwood floors, new paint & carpet, 1,100 sq ft. \$1,200/mth & utilities. Call 831-5108.

Cape Elizabeth: 1 BR apt in private home. Parking, N/S, no pets, laundry room privileges, heat & utilities included. \$700/mo, avail. Dec. 1. References required. Call 799-7131.

ROOMMATE WANTED

South Portland: Share spacious &

The deadlines for announcement-length items and **MARKETPLACE** are November 24 for the December 6 issue and December 8 for the December 20 issue.

All items must be in writing and may be sent by interoffice mail to the Public Information Department, by e-mail to FILIPL, or by fax to 871-6212.

bright 7 room house w/NS. Deck, fireplace, sun porch, hardwood floors, jacuzzi tub & more! Great location. \$500/mo. + ½ utilities. Includes heat. Pets negotiable. Call 799-5229.

CHILD CARE

Warm & friendly day care in Gorham on South St. Pre-school & after school care. Mon - Sat. Flexible hours. Call 839-2009.

WANTED

Rocking chair in good condition. Willing to pay reasonable amount or accept free. Call 871-2751.

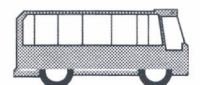
SERVICES

Photography for sporting events. Call 637-2590.

LOST

Two small boxes of about 20 photographic slides. May have lost in BBCH area. Call 773-5219.

MMC EAC
Boston Bus Trip
Saturday, December 9
\$16 per person
Call 871-6018 FMI



What's Happening?

at Maine Medical Center

- All month** **Healthviews.** Comm. TV Network TV 4, Thursdays, 1400 and 2000 hours; Fridays, 0700 hours.
- Nov. 27** CNA Course Info. 1830-2000 hours, Dana Aud. *See p.2* Call 871-2397.
- Nov. 27** Book Fair, through 11/28. *See p.2* Brighton Campus. Call 871-2101.
- Nov. 29** CNA Course Info. 1030-1200 hours, Dana Aud. *See p.2* Call 871-2397.
- Dec. 3** Sewing for premies, 1300-1700 hours. Call 829-6110.
- Dec. 6** Window decorating *See p.2* party, 1600-1900 hours.
- Dec. 9** Boston Bus Trip, 0800 *See p.7* hours.
- Dec. 13** Holiday Receptions. Watch for details!
- Dec. 20** Book Fair, through 12/22. *See p.2* Bramhall Campus. Call 871-2101.

Learn about jobs
available at MMC:

www.mmc.org



The Healing Arts Chorus
presents

A Winter Festival of Music

Friday, December 8

1900 hours

Dana Center Auditorium



This performance is free and open to the public

Craft fair proceeds will support MMC childrens services

Thanks to a generous and creative group of crafters, bakers, and volunteers, this was another successful year for the Maine Medical Center Craft Fair. The second annual fair was held Saturday, October 28, at MMC-Scarborough to benefit The Barbara Bush Children's Hospital, raising an impressive \$2,149.

Thirty-nine different crafters displayed handmade jewelry, ornaments, quilts, and more. Crafters and others also donated handmade items to a raffle table and the bake sale, with 100% of the proceeds benefiting the programs and services at The Barbara Bush Children's Hospital at Maine Medical Center.

Thank you to BBCH Craft Fair Committee members Lori Sweatt, Nancy Gordon, Joanne McNaught, Kathy Meserve, and Beth Thompson for organizing this very successful event. Thanks also to all who got some early holiday shopping done at the fair!

For information about
poisonous plants and
substances, call

The Maine Poison Center

800-442-6305

TTY 877-299-4447

What's Happening is published every other week at Maine Medical Center for members of the hospital community and for friends of the institution throughout Maine and northern New England. Comments, questions, and suggestions may be addressed to the Office of Public Information, MMC, 22 Bramhall Street, Portland, Maine 04102-3175. (207) 871-2196. Editor: Wayne L. Clark.

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What's Happening?

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